

Conservation Reserve Program

General Signup 62 Period
Mar. 4, 2024 through Mar. 29, 2024



Overview

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) will conduct a general Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) signup from March 4, 2024, through March 29, 2024. CRP is a federally funded voluntary program that contracts with agricultural producers so environmentally sensitive agricultural land is not farmed or ranched, but is instead devoted to conservation benefits. CRP participants establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees (known as "covers") to control soil erosion, improve water quality, and develop wildlife habitat. In return, FSA provides participants with rental payments and cost share assistance. Contract duration is between 10 and 15 years. Accepted contracts for this general CRP signup period will become effective Oct. 1, 2024. CRP is authorized by the Food Security Act of 1985 and was reauthorized by the Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018 (the 2018 Farm Bill) and was extended through the Further Continuing Appropriations and Other Extensions Act, 2024. FSA administers CRP, while other USDA agencies and partners provide technical support.

Submitting General CRP Offers

Land not currently enrolled in CRP may be offered during this general CRP signup period. In addition, CRP producers whose CRP contracts are expiring on Sept. 30, 2024, may offer the expiring land in general CRP signup 62. To submit general CRP offers, producers must contact their local FSA office. FSA will accept general CRP offers only during the signup period.

Who is Eligible?

To be eligible for general CRP, a producer must have owned or operated the land for at least 12 months prior to the end of this general CRP signup period, unless:

- ◆ The new owner acquired the land due to the previous owner's death;
- ◆ The ownership change occurred due to foreclosure where the owner exercised a timely right of redemption in accordance with state law or;
- ◆ The circumstance of the acquisition presents adequate assurance to FSA the new owner did not acquire the land for the purpose of placing it in CRP.



What Land is Eligible?

To be eligible for general CRP, land must be cropland (including field margins), planted, or considered planted, to an agricultural commodity four of the six crop years from 2012 to 2017 and be physically and legally capable of being planted (no planting restrictions due to an easement or other legally binding instrument) in a normal manner to an agricultural commodity. Alfalfa or other multiyear grasses and legumes grown in a rotation not to exceed 12 years may also be eligible.

For More Information

On CRP is available in the FSA fact sheet, "Conservation Reserve Program."

On EBI for the general CRP signup period is available by reading the FSA fact sheet, "Conservation Reserve Program Enrollment, Environmental Benefits Index."

On continuous CRP Signup 59 is available in the FSA fact sheet, "Conservation Reserve Program Continuous Sign-Up."

Visit fsa.usda.gov. To locate your local FSA office, visit: farmers.gov/service-locator.

This fact sheet is provided for informational purposes only; other restrictions or requirements may apply. Consult your local FSA office for details.



Additional Cropland Requirements

In addition to the eligible land requirements for the general CRP signup period, cropland must meet one of the following criteria:

- ◆ Have a weighted average erosion index of eight or higher;
- ◆ Be expiring CRP acres or;
- ◆ Be located in a national or state CRP conservation priority area.

CRP Payments

FSA provides producers whose offers are selected for general CRP enrollment with annual rental payments and cost share assistance.

- ◆ **Rental Payments:** In return for establishing permanent resource-conserving covers, FSA provides annual rental payments to participants. FSA bases rental rates on the relative productivity of the soils within each county

and the average dryland cash rent subject to a statutory 85 percent proration. County Office staff working with the producer will calculate the maximum CRP rental rate for each offer. Producers may offer land below the rate to increase the likelihood their offer will be accepted.

- ◆ **Cost-Share Assistance:** FSA provides cost share assistance to participants who establish approved cover on eligible cropland. The cost share assistance cannot exceed 50 percent of the participant's costs to establish approved practices.
- ◆ **Climate-Smart Practice Incentive:** FSA provides an incentive of 3, 5, or 10 percent included in the annual rental payment for CRP practices that will increase carbon sequestration, reduce GHG emissions, and otherwise are climate smart practices. The incentive amount is based on the estimated benefits of each practice.

Ranking General CRP Offers

FSA will rank offers for the general CRP signup period according to the Environmental Benefits Index (EBI). FSA collects data (primarily based on location, soils information and selected conservation practice) and determines the environmental indices for the land offered. FSA ranks each eligible offer in comparison to all other offers and selects from that ranking. After the signup period ends, the Secretary of Agriculture will decide where to make the EBI cutoff. Those who have met previous EBI thresholds are not guaranteed a contract under this signup period. Producers may consult with local FSA and Natural Resource Conservation (NRCS) staff on how to maximize EBI points and increase the likelihood their offer will be accepted.

Additional CRP Signup Opportunities

In addition to the general CRP signup 62 period, producers can offer their most environmentally sensitive land in continuous CRP signup 61 or in the upcoming Grassland CRP signup.